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TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU  
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
MARCH 2, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL  
Mrs Gul Withdraws Her Complaint Against Turkey - Milliyet  
Mrs Gul: "I Withdrew my Complaint Because of My Husband - Hurriyet  
US' 2003 Narcotics Report: "Turkey is a Transit Country for Narcotics" - Hurriyet  
Democracy in Iraq, Interim Constitution Approved - Sabah  
Denktas: "Solution is Very Hard" - Sabah  
Turkmens Ignored in the New Iraqi Constitution - Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS  
Weston Warns Both Sides in Cyprus Not to Miss Opportunities - Radikal  
Greek Cypriots Rejected Turkish Cypriots' Proposals - Cumhuriyet  
Greater Middle East Preparations in Ankara Prior to Grossman Visit - Cumhuriyet  
A Kurdish Official Says Erdogan's Visit to US Changed US' Kurdish Policy - Zaman  
US' Stance Changed Towards Kurdish Demands on Request of Turkey - Yeni Safak  
No Place For Turkmen Demands in the New Iraqi Constitution - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Foreign Minister Gul's Wife Withdraws Her Turban Case from the ECHR: All papers report that Hayrunnisa Gul, the wife of Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul, has decided to withdraw her case from the ECHR. Mrs.Gul had filed a complaint against Turkey, after her application to Ankara University was rejected because she wore a headscarf. Mrs.Gul said that, because of her husband, she became the plaintiff and the defendant in the same case, and this forced her to withdraw her case.

Iraqi Interim Constitution: All papers report that the Iraqi Governing Council yesterday approved the interim constitution. The Constitution says that Islam is the State Religion but not the basis for law. "Hurriyet" says that the constitution encourages an Islamic state in Iraq. "Sabah" says despite the Kurdish demands for expanded autonomy, the new constitution preserves their current status. And the general belief among the Kurds is that the US' stance changed against Kurds after continuing pressure by Turkey. However, "Turkiye" says that the constitution gives the green light to a Kurdish state. Kurdish language becomes an official language together with Arabic. Reportedly, Turkmens vowed to fight for their rights and they complained that they have been kept out of the administration.

Cyprus: "Cumhuriyet" reports that Greek Cypriots have rejected all proposals made by the Turkish Cypriot side. The negotiations continue between the both sides and Denktas continues to brief the press on the developments despite requests for a news blackout by Erdogan and De Soto. "Zaman" draws attention to the words of Denktas that no progress had been made at Cyprus talks. "Cumhuriyet" reports that Denktas will come to Ankara on Thursday to meet with PM Erdogan.

## EDITORIALS

Greater Middle East Initiative; Cyprus

"Turkey getting on Greater Middle East State stage"  
Sedat Ergin observed in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (3/2):  
"Prime Minister Erdogan focused on human rights, supremacy  
of law, and democratization in his meeting with President  
Bush at the White House last January. . Erdogan gave Bush  
the message that the US should launch its Middle East  
initiative via Turkey. . Ankara's views on this initiative  
are not in accordance with the tough policies pursued by the  
Bush Administration thus far. MFA U/S Ugur Ziyal said in  
Washington that in order to make modernization,  
liberalization, and democratization in the Greater Middle  
East a reality, institutions must not be destroyed, but  
strengthened through evolution. . In a speech at Harvard  
University, Erdogan invited the US to gain the trust of the  
people of the region, and added that change in the region  
should be carried out by gentle methods. This is the point  
where the problem lies. The Bush Administration does not  
believe in gentle methods, and is destroying institutions in  
Iraq. The Bush Administration lacks the confidence required  
to succeed in this project."

"Greater Middle East"

Hasan Cemal commented in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (3/2):  
"The Americans' Greater Middle East is a Muslim region.  
Washington believes that global terror is rooted in this  
Muslim region. . Muslim countries in the region must be  
introduced to democracy, because it is religious regimes,  
such as Iran and Saudi Arabia, or authoritarian regimes,  
such as Syria, that are feeding terror. . Terror channels  
will be blocked to the extent that these countries are  
democratized and integrated into the world. . The GME  
project cannot be regarded solely as an initiative related  
to oil and Israel. . Europe, with its Muslim population of  
14 million, cannot remain aloof to changes of regime in this  
region in a post-9/11 world. Germanys' Schroeder has agreed  
in principle with President Bush on the GME project.  
Turkey's door will be knocked on as well, just as Marc  
Grossman is currently knocking on the doors of the EU,  
Turkey and a number of Arab countries."

Everyone will pass the ball to Annan"

Mehmet Ali Birand opined in the mass appeal "Posta" (3/2):  
"Neither Papadopoulos nor Denktas support a solution. . But  
they also don't want to be perceived as the side that left  
the negotiating table. . The Greek Cypriot side is  
resisting even more than Denktas. They both indicate that  
they don't want a solution based on the Annan Plan. . Both  
sides prefer Ankara and Athens to come in and make some of  
the difficult decisions for them. . The government of  
Turkey will wait and see what Athens does before deciding on  
its policy. If Athens takes some constructive steps, Turkey  
will follow, but if not, it will let UN Secretary-General  
Annan resolve the matter. . The attitude of Athens will  
become clear after the March 7 general elections in Greece.  
. Ankara prefers Papandreou's victory because it is  
familiar with this leader. . However, the problem is that  
Greece does not want to make any decisions on Cyprus. . The  
Greeks see themselves as responsible for the past troubles  
of having interfered with the domestic affairs of the  
island. . Athens feels it has paid for its past mistakes by  
making Cyprus a member of the EU and does not want to bear  
the responsibility of an agreement that will affect the  
future of the Cypriots. . That's why they might prefer  
Annan to make the final decisions."

EDELMAN